

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 036550

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ORIGIN IO-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 /018 R

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DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:JFTEFFT:CB

APPROVED BY IO:TLYNCH

AF/W:ELOLLIS

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P 181732Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

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FOL RPT STATE 36550 ACTION ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
INFO LONDON PARIS MOSCOW IBADAN KADUNA 13 FEB.

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, NI

SUBJECT: SITREP ON NIGERIAN COUP

1. SUMMARY. ATTEMPTED COUP FRIDAY MORNING APPEARS TO
HAVE BEEN PUT DOWN BY FORCES LOYAL TO THE MUHAMMED
GOVERNMENT, BUT MUHAMMED MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED, AND
PRECISE OUTCOME STILL IN DOUBT AS OF 2100 HOURS GMT
FEBRUARY 13.

2. GUNFIRE OCCURRED BRIEFLY AT SEVERAL SPOTS IN AND
NEARDODAN BARRACKS, THE SUPREME HEADQUARTERS OF THE
FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT, DURING THE MORNING OF
FEBRUARY 13. LAGOS RADIO BROADCAST MARTIAL MUSIC AND
KEPT REPEATING ANNOUNCEMENT FROM LT. COL. J. S. DIMKA
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PAGE 02 STATE 036550

THAT QUOTE MURTALA MUHAMMED'S HYPOCRISY HAS BEEN DETECTED

UNQUOTE, AND QUOTE HIS GOVERNMENT IS NOW OVERTHROWN BY THE YOUNG REVOLUTIONARIES UNQUOTE UNTIL IT WENT OFF THE AIR AT APPROXIMATELY 1450 HOURS LOCAL. AT ABOUT THIS TIME MORE FIGHTING APPARENTLY TOOK PLACE AT DODAN BARRACKS AND AT THE RADIO STATION.

3. AT 1300 LOCAL, KADUNA RADIO BROADCAST ANNOUNCEMENT FROM COMMANDER OF THE FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION TELLING THE PUBLIC THAT QUOTE THE SITUATION IN LAGOS HAS NOTHING

TO DO WITH THE REST OF THE COUNTRY UNQUOTE AND THAT THE PERPETRATORS ARE A QUOTE HANDFUL OF OFFICERS WHO ARE BEING ROUNDED UP NOW UNQUOTE. AT 1815 LOCAL, LAGOS RADIO RETURNED TO THE AIR WITH TERSE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE COUP HAD BEEN CRUSHED, SITUATION NORMAL, AND SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL IN SESSION. ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN REPEATED EVERY QUARTER HOUR AT LEAST UNTIL 2100 LOCAL.

4. GENERAL MUHAMMED, THE FORMER CHIEF OF STATE, IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED. CHIEF OF STAFF OBASANJO (FIRST IN LINE OF SUCCESSION AFTER MUHAMMED) MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED BUT HAS MOST RECENTLY BEEN REPORTED ALIVE. NAMES OF ANY CASUALTIES HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED.

5. DEPARTMENT HAS NO INDICATION THAT THERE ARE DISTURBANCES ANYWHERE OUTSIDE LAGOS. WE ARE MAINTAINING CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH AMEMBASSY LAGOS. NO RPT NO INCIDENT INVOLVING ANY AMERICAN CITIZEN HAS BEEN REPORTED.

6. ALL BORDERS AND AIRPORTS WERE CLOSED FRIDAY MORNING AND REMAIN CLOSED, AND A CURFEW IS IN EFFECT FRIDAY NIGHT. TRAVELERS SHOULD THEREFORE BE ADVISED TO DEFER TRAVEL TO NIGERIA UNTIL THE SITUATION IS CLARIFIED.

7. DEPARTMENT IS USING FOLLOWING FIGURES FOR NUMBER OF AMERICANS IN NIGERIA: 126 USG EMPLOYEES. ABOUT 260 EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS IN LAGOS AND ABOUT 90 ELSEWHERE. IN ADDITION, ABOUT 4,000 PRIVATE AMERICAN RESIDENTS IN NIGERIA, AND AS MANY AS 1,000 TEMPORARY VISITORS AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 036550

TOURISTS.

8. YOU MAY DRAW ON FOREGOING IN ANSWERING INQUIRIES FROM HOST GOVERNMENT OR PUBLIC.

9. FYI, WE HAVE VERY LITTLE INFORMATION ON THE IDENTITIES AND MOTIVES OF THE COUP PLOTTERS. LT. COL. DIMKA IS DIRECTOR OF PHYSICAL TRAINING FOR THE NIGERIAN ARMY. HE

IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN BORN IN BENUE-PLATEAU STATE AND
IS FROM ANGAS TRIBE. HIS BROTHER, THE COMMISSIONER OF
POLICE IN KWARA STATE, IS MARRIED TO A SISTER OF GENERAL
YAKUBU GOWON, THE FORMER HEAD OF STATE. GOWON, WHO IS
ALSO ANGAS FROM BENUE-PLATEAU STATE, TOLD PRESS IN
ENGLAND ON FRIDAY THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE COUP IN
ADVANCE AND THAT HE VERY MUCH REGRETTED THAT IT HAD
OCCURRED.

KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, SITREP
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE036550
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JFTEFFT:CB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760061-0217
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760239/aaaabhpr.tel
Line Count: 127
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <01 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITREP ON NIGERIAN COUP
TAGS: PINS, PINT, NI
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006